

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION
FREEDOM OF INFORMATION/PRIVACY ACTS SECTION
COVER SHEET

SUBJECT: COMMONWEALTH
COLLEGE/MENA ARKANSAS

Commonwealth College

MENA, ARKANSAS

8-2-1926

RECORDED & INDEXED

SEP 21 1926

61-6156-1

United States Department of Justice,
Washington, D.C.

SEP 7 1926 T.M.

Sir:

52301

The First

On August 19, 1926 at the state convention of the American Legion at Little Rock, Arkansas, [redacted] of Stuttgart, Arkansas made charges against Commonwealth College to the effect that it had received \$100,000 from the I.W.O. and \$50,000 from Soviet Russia. He asserted that this information was gotten from a report of the Department of Justice which he had seen but of which he had no copy.

We believe that we are entitled to a knowledge of any such reports if they are being sent out by the Department of Justice. Will you kindly inform us at once whether the Department of Justice has issued any such report, whether you have furnished [redacted] or anybody else with such a statement, and whether you have any evidence at all tending to substantiate such an assertion. The name of the Department of Justice is being used to back up these libelous statements. We believe that the Department should in all fairness and justice put itself on record in this matter since its prestige is being used to circulate such a falsehood.

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED
DATE 9/17/12 BY SP1 GSK/KTC
124,192

351:40's

61-6156-1

September 20, 1926.

RECORDED

b7c 52300

[REDACTED]
Commonwealth College,
Mena, Arkansas.

Dear Sir:-

I am in receipt of your communication of
the 2nd instant, in which you inquire concerning
an alleged report to the effect that the Department
of Justice has issued some statement concerning the
Commonwealth College.

You are advised that no statement of any
character has been issued by the Department of
Justice concerning the Commonwealth College.

Very truly yours,

~~Very truly yours,~~ Director.

~~date 9/17/82 by SP/9sk/LK~~

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED
DATE 9/17/82 BY SP/9sk/LK
224,193

W. NORRIS, NEBR., CHAIRMAN
ALEX. L. MCNARY, OREG.
THUR. CAPPER, KANS.
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WOODBRIDGE W. FERRIS, MICH.

United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON
AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY

MADEIRA J. TALBERT, CLERK

September 14, 1926.

61-6156

Bureau of Investigation,
Department of Justice,
Washington, D. C.

52299

Gentlemen:

There is located in Mena, Arkansas,
an alleged college known as the 'Commonwealth'
College. It has been alleged that this is a
communistic school and has and is now receiving
endowments from the Russian Soviet Government.

In a recent meeting of the American
Legion of Arkansas it was alleged that your
Department had investigated this school. I wish
you would advise me what your record shows about
this school and give me any information you can.

The American Legion feels quite strongly
in the matter. Please advise me.

Very truly yours,

T. H. Caraway

W/a

RECORDED

SEP 22 1926

61-6156-2

get in

61-6156-2

September 20, 1926.

RECORDED

Mr. T. H. Caraway,

52298

United States Senate,

Washington, D. C.

My dear Senator:-

I have the honor to acknowledge receipt of your communication of the 14th instant, in which you inquire concerning information in the files of this Bureau upon the Commonwealth College.

A thorough search in the files of the Bureau of Investigation fails to disclose that any report has been made upon this institution.

It is noted that the American Legion of Arkansas is reported as having alleged that this Department investigated the Commonwealth College. However, as I have stated, the records of the Bureau fail to show where any investigation has been made of this institution. Consequently, I cannot furnish you with any facts upon the institution.

Very truly yours,

Director.

~~ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED
DATE 9/17/92 BY SP1/92/111~~
224, 173

SEN. L. SORAN, IDAHO
SEN. W. MORRIS, NEBR.
SEN. P. ERNST, KY.
SEN. W. M. HANS, COLO.
SEN. W. HARRIS, OKLA.
SEN. CHARLES S. DEPEIN, ILL.
SEN. FREDERICK H. GILLET, N.Y.
SEN. GUY D. GOFF, W. VA.

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SEN. W. M. HANS
SEN. W. HARRIS
SEN. CHARLES S. DEPEIN
SEN. FREDERICK H. GILLET
SEN. GUY D. GOFF

MURRAY D. SMITH, ASST. CLERK

United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

52297

September 21, 1926.

61-6156

Department of Justice,
Bureau of Investigation,
Washington, D. C.

Gentlemen:

Please send me a copy of your
letter of September 20th in the matter of
the Commonwealth College at Mena, Arkansas.

Very truly yours,

W/a

T. H. Coraway

SEP 24 1926

61-6156-3
SEP 22 1926
JUL 24 1926
JUL 24 1926

get

61-6156-3

September 21, 1936.

RECEIVED
1936

Hon. T. E. Cernoway,
United States Senate,
Washington, D. C.

My dear Senator:-

In compliance with your request of the
21st instant, I am enclosing herewith a copy of
my communication addressed to you on September
20th.

Very truly yours,

Enc. 42671

Director.

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED
DATE 9/11/82 BY sp/gpd/lr
224,143

2

C O P Y

GAJ

UNITED STATES SENATE
Committee on the Judiciary

September 27, 1926.

Hon. J. Edgar Hoover, Director,
Bureau of Investigation,
Washington, D.C.

Dear Sir:

Referring to the matter of the Commonwealth
College at Mean, Arkansas about which I wrote you be-
fore, I am enclosing herewith a letter and enclosures from
[redacted] Mena, Arkansas.

If you think this is worthy of investigation
it is perhaps a good idea that you investigate it.
Please return the enclosed letter. *b7c*

Very truly yours,

(S) T. H. Caraway

OCT 6 - 1926

b7c

RECORDED
67-6156-4
BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION
OCT 5 1926 A.M.
DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
Div. Two

[redacted]

Mrs. J. E. Caraway
10/1/26

6016

MENA, ARKANSAS

September 23rd, 1926.

Hon. T.H. Caraway,
United States Senate,
Washington, D.C.

Dear Senator Caraway:-

Thank you for your recent letter relative to Commonwealth College. You ask that I give you some information about this school. There is really very little definite information at hand. The school was established first in Mena about two years ago and it later moved out in the country about ten miles where a farm was purchased; since that time they have erected 8 or 10 additional wooden buildings; they have about 8 or 10 faculty members, (whose names you will find on the enclosed literature), and they have about 40 or 50 students, all of whom are drawn from out of the State of Arkansas, as I understand; they claim to be a labor college; there is no doubt but that they are a bunch of socialists but of what degree of "pinkness" or "redness" we are unable to determine at this time but this is one of the points the Legion Committee is seeking to ascertain; it will be noted that Kate Richards O'Hare

is one of the faculty members and is Dean of Women and it is noted that she is now moving to the college. We know very little about the other faculty members, in fact nothing. They have been very defiant toward the Legion and the Committee ever since the charges were made at the Department Convention, although the Convention and the Executive Committee did not condemn the college but refused to take action until an investigation of the charges could be made; you have no doubt noted this attitude if you have read the accounts of the controversy in the MENA STAR and in the ARKANSAS GAZETTE. In their last communication they have practically refused our request to inspect their books and to furnish us with detailed information about their course of study, text books, etc. and a history of the faculty members, etc. as requested in my formal letter of September 7th.

We trust that you will assist us in getting some information about this college from the Department of Justice and possibly from the Post Office Department. So much publicity has been given to alleged Department of Justice report I think that Department should furnish the Committee with a copy of such report if it is in existence. I will be glad to keep your name out of the matter and at the same time will appreciate your assistance in obtaining any information from government sources. Thanking you in this matter, I am

Sincerely

OVER

P.S. We wish you would please ascertain through the War and Navy Departments the military record (if any) of , who they claim was in the service during the war. Also of and

It might also be well to try to ascertain from the Department of Justice whether or not any members of the faculty and the Advisory Council, as shown on the enclosed Announcement, have been convicted of any offense against the government and whether or not their activities have been investigated.

I understand that it is claimed that 8 or 9 members of the faculty were in the service during the War and if it is not too much trouble we would like to check up on all the members of the faculty, that is the male members.

COMMONWEALTH COLLEGE FORTNIGHTLY SUPPLEMENT

VOLUME II.

MAY 15, 1926

NUMBER 10

Published twice a month at Mena, Arkansas, by Commonwealth College.
Entered as second class matter January 30, 1926, at the postoffice at Mena,
Arkansas, under the Act of August 24, 1912.

ANNOUNCEMENT COMMONWEALTH COLLEGE 1926-27

Commonwealth was organized in 1923 to provide education for workers on a self-supporting basis.



Commonwealth is located in the Ozarks near Mena, Arkansas, where it operates agricultural and other basic industries by means of four hours' labor daily from its students and teachers.



Commonwealth seeks to develop in young men and women of the working class the capacity to serve the labor movement.



Commonwealth is a non-sectarian, non-propaganda institution. It sponsors no particular religious, political, or economic dogma. It holds that scientific experimentation carries the only hope of adjustment or solution of personal and social problems.



Commonwealth is the only institution for higher education where both teachers and students earn their maintenance by part-time labor while engaged in academic work.

For further information write to

HAROLD Z. BROWN, Executive Secretary,
COMMONWEALTH COLLEGE
MENA, ARKANSAS

Education for Workers

OFFICERS OF ADMINISTRATION

WILLIAM EDWARD ZEUCH	Educational Director
F. M. GOODHUE	Dean of Men
KATE RICHARDS O'HARE	Dean of Women and Field Secretary
HAROLD Z. BROWN	Executive Secretary
ERNEST E. KOCH	Industrial Manager

FACULTY

Instructors

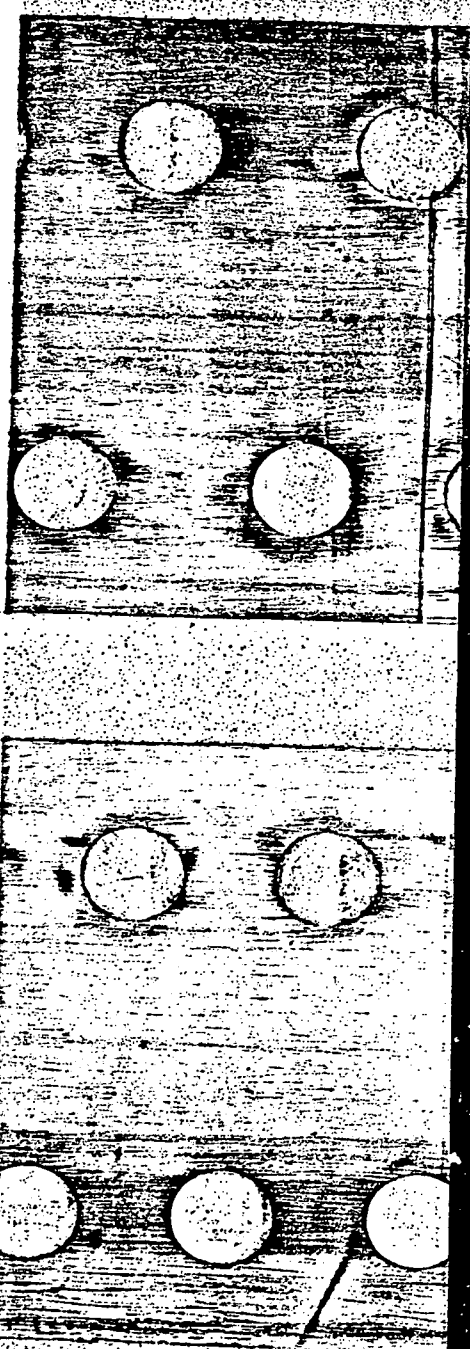
WILBUR CLARKE BENTON	History and Law
HAROLD Z. BROWN	Psychology and Contemporary Literature
ALICE A. CHOWN	English for the Foreign-Born
HAROLD RUSSELL COY	English and Labor Journalism
MARGARET WEEKS COY	Pedagogy and Social Psychology
F. M. GOODHUE	Mathematics and Statistics
COVINGTON HALL	Labor History and Problems
ALICE HANSON	Public Speaking
CARLOS V. HILL	Science and Co-operative Methods
KATE RICHARDS O'HARE	Social Problems
RUTH SUTHERLAND	English Literature
IVY VAN ETTEN	Stenography and Typewriting
WILLIAM EDWARD ZEUCH	Economic Theory and Problems

Assistants

IRENE BROWN	English Classics
ROSS CLARK BROWN	Economic Geography and History
FRITZ HOHN	Principles of Economics
GERTRUDE HOHN	German
LUCIEN KOCH	General History

ADVISORY COUNCIL

ALICE STONE BLACKWELL	LYNN J. FRAZIER
WILLIAM BOUCK	WILLIAM H. GREEN
MARY D. BRITE	JOHN HAYNES HOLMES
ALBERT F. COYLE	ERNEST R. MEITZEN
JAMES A. PHILLIPS	
UPTON SINCLAIR	
CARRIE WEAVER SMITH	
LUTHER ELY SMITH	
MIRIAM VAN WATERS	



Education for Workers

HISTORY

Commonwealth College was organized in April, 1923. Its founders were interested in experimenting with the idea of non-propaganda higher education for workers on a self-supporting basis. They proposed to try out an educational plan whereby the students and teachers were to work four hours daily (twenty-four hours a week) for maintenance and to devote the remainder of each week to study and classroom work. Local conditions in Louisiana, where the school was first established, made impossible a proper development of the project. After a thorough search for a suitable location the institution removed to Mena, Arkansas, in January, 1925. In the spring of that year the present site of the College was purchased, and the development of a permanent school was begun.

The resident group of teacher-workers spent the summer of 1925 clearing land, putting in and tending crops, and erecting the present roughly finished buildings. These include a classroom building, an administration cottage, a commons that serves as social center as well as dining hall, a men's dormitory, a women's dormitory, a store building, and three faculty cottages.

LOCATION

Commonwealth is located on the Tallbina Highway, ten miles west of Mena, county seat of Polk County, in the Ouachita range of the Ozark Mountains in southwestern Arkansas. The college campus, which is within a few miles of the Oklahoma line, is on high bluffs bordering Mill Creek and overlooking Mill Creek Valley in which the college farms are located. The encircling mountains, which rise to a height of 2,700 feet, afford an ever-changing spectacle. This region is noted for its varied, delightful scenery and its equable, healthful climate.

Mena, which is on the main line of the Kansas City Southern Railway, is the freight and express receiving point as well as the postoffice for Commonwealth College.

PURPOSE

Higher education is today beyond the reach of most working youth. In order to meet this situation Commonwealth is experimenting to place higher education for workers on a self-supporting basis. It is evolving a method whereby an opportunity for advanced instruction, especially in the social studies, may be offered to those working youths who have the native intelligence and natural capacity to serve the workers but are unable to develop their powers for want of funds.

Commonwealth is not a propaganda institution. It sponsors no particular religious, political, or economic dogma. It aims to develop the personality and power of its students for efficient service in the labor movement. It seeks to put within their grasp demonstrated facts and to develop in them the scientific attitude which challenges an unthinking acceptance of ideas and institutions. Commonwealth strives to make its students realize that intelligent experimentation carries the only hope of adjustment or solution of personal and social problems. In those fields of human interest that are beyond the realm of possible experimentation it attempts to cultivate a full measure of tolerance.

METHOD

Commonwealth has spent three years experimenting to develop a method of education for workers on a basis of self-maintenance. Each student and teacher spends four hours a day (twenty-four hours a week) on the farms, in the work shops, or at domestic labor. The remainder of the student's time is available for study and classroom work. While incidentally a student may acquire some degree of skill in a trade through his industrial work, it should be clearly understood that Commonwealth is not a trade school, that the industrial work is for the purpose of gross maintenance, and that much of it is of necessity unskilled labor from which the student cannot hope to derive any particular technical proficiency. The skill, experience, and preferences of the student, however, are given consideration in deciding work assignments.

During the academic year 1926-27 Commonwealth will continue to build up its school community. Consequently the students will live under semi-pioneer conditions.

The school day at Commonwealth consists of five fifty-minute recitation periods extending with five-minute intermissions from 7:30 a. m. to 12 m. The school week consists of six days. The school year consists of two semesters of fifteen weeks each.

Commonwealth is pursuing the theory that small classes are best adapted to higher learning by reason of the intimate contact between teacher and student. Likewise it feels that a small institution is better adapted to the efficient production necessary to the self-maintenance of the students and of the institution as a whole. Hence a large college community is not contemplated. It is not desired that the students shall ever exceed 150 or that the number of resident workers, consisting of the members of the teaching staff and maintenance departments, shall be more than a third of that number. Extension of effort along the educational lines mapped out can take place, therefore, only by increasing the number of such institutions—for which Commonwealth seeks to be a working model.

ENTRANCE

Commonwealth will accept only fifty applicants for the year 1926-27. No person will be admitted except on formal written application, which must be approved by the Educational Director. No individual under fifteen years of age will be admitted. Entrance to the Collegiate Department is open to those who possess a secondary school education or its equivalent. Entrance to the Preparatory Department is open to those who possess a grammar school education or its equivalent. There are no formal educational requirements for admission to the Short Labor Course; each application will be considered on its own merits. Only students of promise will be admitted to the school, and those found incapable of a high standard of work will be eliminated.

A certificate of good health will be required of all students as a condition of entrance.

Further information and application blanks may be secured by writing to the Executive Secretary, Commonwealth College, Mena, Arkansas.

FEES

Board, lodging, and laundry service are provided for all students in exchange for maintenance work as outlined on the preceding pages. A tuition charge of \$50 a semester (\$100 for the full school year) is payable at the beginning of each semester. A deposit of \$10 on this fee shall be paid on acceptance of application. No other fees are collected.

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION

The Commonwealth College Fortnightly, published twice a month throughout the calendar year, is the official publication of the school. Persons who wish to keep in touch with the work of Commonwealth College are advised to subscribe. The subscription price is one dollar a year.

CURRICULUM

1926-27

PREPARATORY DEPARTMENT

First Semester (15 weeks)
Oct. 4, 1926, to Jan. 15, 1927

Second Semester (15 weeks)
Jan. 17 to April 30, 1927

JUNIOR YEAR

English Composition*
General History*
Unified Mathematics*

English Composition*
General History*
Unified Mathematics or
Plane Geometry*

SENIOR YEAR

English Classics*
Economic Geography
Plane or Solid Geometry
Elements of Science*
Stenography
Typewriting

English Classics*
Economic History
Solid Geometry or Trigonometry
Elements of Science*
Stenography
Typewriting

*Required courses.

The Preparatory Department is designed to be a testing and training school where those unqualified for higher education may be eliminated.

The course in Elements of Science will consist of four hours of recitation and four hours of laboratory work weekly. All other courses will consist of six fifty-minute recitation periods weekly.

Special work in written and spoken English will be provided, whenever possible, for foreign-born students who lack a sufficient grasp of the language for high-grade scholarship.

CURRICULUM

1926-27

COLLEGIATE DEPARTMENT

First Semester (15 weeks)
Oct. 4, 1926, to Jan. 15, 1927

Second Semester (15 weeks)
Jan. 17 to April 30, 1927

FRESHMAN YEAR

Principles of Economics
General Psychology
Modern Poetry
American History and Government
Extemporaneous Speaking†

Advanced Composition†
Accountancy
Elementary Law

Principles of Economics
General Psychology
Modern Drama
American History and Government
Extemporaneous Speaking and
Parliamentary Drill†
Advanced Composition†
Accountancy
Business Law

JUNIOR YEAR

Money and Banking†
Principles of Statistics
Labor History
Educational Psychology†
Development of English Literature
Oral Interpretation†
Labor Journalism†
Advanced Law

Economics of Current Events†
Statistics in Labor Disputes
Labor Problems
Social Psychology†
Development of English Literature
Play Production†
Labor Journalism†
Advanced Law

SENIOR YEAR

Advanced Economic Theory†
Social Origins†
Social Reconstruction†
Political Science†
History of the Modern World
World Classics
Philosophical Theory†
Persuasion and Argumentation†
Co-operative Methods†
Advanced Law

History of Economic Thought†
Social Problems†
Social Reconstruction†
Modern Governments†
History of the Modern World
Contemporary Letters
History of Philosophy†
Types of Public Address†
Co-operative Methods†
Advanced Law

†Three hours a week.

German and Spanish classes will be organized in the year 1926-27. Classes in French and Esperanto will be given if there is sufficient demand.

The standard course, in both Preparatory and Collegiate Departments consists of six recitation periods a week throughout the semester. No student will be permitted to take less than twelve hours or more than eighteen hours a week.

CURRICULUM

1926-27

SHORT LABOR COURSE

(1 to 3 Years)

The Short Labor Course is open to adults active in the labor or farmer movement. It is designed to meet the needs of those who can spend but a short time at the College and wish to avail themselves of the opportunity to take specialized work. The subjects grouped below are taken from the regular curriculum and are so arranged that a student may choose from them according to his preparation, experience, and plans. There are no formal educational requirements for admission to the Short Labor Course; each application will be considered on its own merits.

ORAL AND WRITTEN EXPRESSION

English Composition
Business English
Labor Journalism
Extemporaneous Speaking and Parliamentary Drill
Persuasion, Argumentation, and Types of Public Address.

SOCIAL STUDIES AND PSYCHOLOGY

Economic Geography and History
General History
Principles of Economics
Labor History and Problems
General Psychology

TECHNICAL COURSES

Stenography and Typewriting
Labor Accounting
Principles of Statistics and Statistics in Labor Disputes
Elementary and Labor Law
Co-operative Methods

COMMONWEALTH COLLEGE FORTNIGHTLY

Vol. II., No. 17

MENA, ARK., SEPTEMBER 1, 1926

\$1.00 a Year

COMMONERS FATTEN ON TWO BITS A DAY

**Low Living Costs Make Arkansas
Ideal For Workers' College**

Twenty-five cents is the amount allowed by the Commonwealth budget to cover each resident worker's three daily meals. When accounts were checked recently it was found that the school's summer food bills to date lagged \$20 behind the budget figure. Yet Commoners have been living well and gaining weight the past months. Quantities of home-grown produce, which form the backbone of the Commonwealth bill of fare, and backwoods prices for many other staple foods furnish the answer to this riddle.

Absent Students Envy.

Absent students who remember gastronomic vicissitudes incidental to the higher learning at Commonwealth during its first two years will turn green at the recital of this summer's menu. Twenty-five cents is also allowed for the daily food bill of each student and staff member during the school year. But fresh fruits and vegetables, costing little in season, are prohibitively priced or unobtainable during the winter months, so school-year fare, though adequate, is frugal compared with summer chow.

New potatoes, cabbage, beets, carrots, onions, sweet corn, green peppers, and three varieties of green beans are staple articles of diet now. These are plentifully supplied by the Commonwealth farms and gardens. Home-grown watermelons and muskmelons (no market value at present writing) also abound and

[Continued on Page Two.]

ALL FIELD CROPS LAID BY; LATE FALL GARDEN SET OUT

The last fortnight saw the Commonwealth crops safely laid by. For non-agricultural readers it may be explained that this means that the crops received their last cultivation of the season. From now on until late in the fall harvesting will be the predominating farm activity.

A fall garden which will provide fresh vegetables for students during the early weeks of school is now be-

ing set out. To August Schmidt goes credit for care of the hotbeds whose contents are being transplanted. He reports that beets, turnips, rutabagas, late string beans, and late cabbage, lettuce, and radishes will be available in October.

Attention Incoming Students!

Those coming to Commonwealth for the first time should bear in mind the following:

The only money charge for attendance at Commonwealth is the \$100 yearly tuition fee. This fee includes the use of text books. Food, lodging, and laundry service is provided by the school in return for the four hours' daily industrial labor which every student and teacher performs. Recreational facilities are at the disposal of everyone gratis.

The school does not provide students with clothing, bed linen, towels, blankets, and other personal belongings. Students should bring these with them. Neither does the school provide personal incidentals, such as soap, tooth paste, writing paper, pencils, etc. Students should bring, in addition to their tuition fees, enough money for these small expenses.

What Students Must Bring.

Every student who comes to Commonwealth is expected to provide the following individual equipment, in addition to clothing:

Three or more sheets, minimum size 60"x90"; one pillow; two pillow cases; bath towels; hand towels; blankets to meet individual needs.

It should be kept in mind that although Mena is in the South, the nights are cool in summer and cold in winter. Therefore everyone should bring heavy bedding and heavy clothing. There is little snow but much rain during the winter, so rain clothing is needed. Those who swim should not neglect to bring bathing suits.

Students will find work clothing a necessity. Each student may please himself or herself about dress clothes. The school group dresses plainly and simply.

C. C. TEACHERS JOIN ARKANSAS LABORITES

**Local 194, A. F. T., Affiliates With
Arkansas Federation of Labor**

Commonwealth Local of the American Federation of Teachers is a pioneer in its craft and in its local. Immediately upon receiving its charter, the local sought affiliation with the Arkansas State Federation of Labor. It discovered that it was distinguished: (1) as the only labor organization in Polk County; (2) as the first teachers' union in Arkansas. Arkansas labor received Commoners with open arms. Replying to Ivy Van Etten, secretary of the Commonwealth local, H. M. Thackeray, secretary of the state federation of labor, wrote:

I am indeed glad to receive your letter notifying us that you have organized a local union of teachers and requesting affiliation with the State Federation of Labor.

This information will in all probability enable us to start a campaign of organization among the teachers of the state, and I wish to congratulate your local union on the step it has taken.

We wish to assure you that we sincerely appreciate your prompt action in seeking affiliation.

[Continued on Page Two.]

MOBILE TRADES COUNCIL WILL SEND STUDENT TO C. C.

The Central Trades Council of Mobile, Alabama, has announced its intention of establishing a scholarship and sending a student to Commonwealth College for the year 1926-27.

Some time ago (see Fortnightly, August 1) a union-made garment manufacturer of Mobile offered to give half the \$100 tuition fee necessary to send a labor student to Commonwealth if the trades council would raise the other half and select a student from their ranks.

The council, writes President Charles H. Franck, was delayed in signifying its acceptance not because of lack of interest, but because of difficulty in finding a thoroughly acceptable student.

Commonwealth College Fortnightly

Published twice a month at Mena, Arkansas, by Commonwealth College, a school for self-maintaining, non-propaganda education for workers. Subscription, one dollar a year. Entered as second class matter, January 30, 1925, at the post office at Mena, Arkansas, under the Act of August 24, 1912.

Signed articles express only individual opinion.

Editors, particularly of labor and farmer papers, are welcome to make free use of material appearing in these columns. A line crediting the Commonwealth College Fortnightly will be appreciated.

Vol. II, No. 17 September 1, 1926

WHAT IS COMMONWEALTH COLLEGE?

Commonwealth was organized in 1923 to provide education for workers on a self-supporting basis.

Commonwealth is located in the Ozarks near Mena, Ark., where it operates agricultural and other basic industries by means of four hours' daily labor from its students and teachers.

Commonwealth seeks to develop in young men and women of the working class the capacity to serve the labor movement.

Commonwealth is a non-sectarian, non-propaganda institution. It sponsors no particular religious, political or economic dogma. It holds that scientific experimentation carries the only hope of advancement or solution of personal and social problems.

Commonwealth is the only institution for higher education where both teachers and students earn their maintenance by part-time labor while engaged in academic work.

Commoners Fatten

[Continued from Page One.]

form an oft-recurring motif in the dietary composition. All of the wheat bread, baked in the college kitchen, is another staple. A one-pound loaf costs five cents for materials. Milk from the college Holstein-Jerseys costs from 10 to 20 cents a gallon, depending on season and cow productivity.

Beef, bought by the quarter from neighbors who butcher their own cattle, is worth eight cents a pound. Butter (used sparingly) costs 30 cents a pound, as it is necessary to buy the cream pending additions to the college dairy herd.

During the peach season, which just closed, first quality large freestone peaches sold for 8 to 90 cents a bushel. Several truck loads were purchased for late frosts intercepted the Commonwealth peach yield this year. Grapes are just coming in, priced at three cents a pound. The college grows some apples, and

Who's Who At Commonwealth

WILBUR CLARKE BENTON

Six hours in sleep; in law's grave study six; Four spend in prayer; the rest on nature fix. Lines quoted in Latin by Sir Edward Coke. I'll answer him by law; I'll not budge an inch.

Shakespeare: *Taming of the Shrew.*

Wilbur Clarke Benton, instructor in law and history, member and secretary of the college board of trustees, member of the Arkansas bar, unofficial legal adviser to Commonwealth, industrial manager emeritus, and present custodian of the kitchen garden under the suzerainty of Agricultural Manager Ernest Koch, enjoys a unique distinction. He is the sole representative of the learned professions at Commonwealth.

Nor is his present eminence shrouded against the background of an uneventful past. Benton's life has been distinctly variegated. Born in 1872, he was reared in Newport, Kentucky. Following family tradition, he started out at 22 to acquire a legal education. Instead of washing dishes or clipping the university president's lawn, young Benton elected to work his way through college by officiating as secretary of a private surgical hospital in Cincinnati. After four years he was ad-

mitted to the Ohio bar, and shortly thereafter was appointed Registrar of the faculty at the University of Cincinnati.

Webster's Collegiate dictionary says: "The three professions, or learned professions, are, especially, theology, law, and medicine."

The tradition started with Thomas H. Benton, Missouri lawyer-politician of pre-Civil War days and right-hand man of Andrew Jackson. Two brothers of the Benton clan practice law in Newport, Kentucky, today.

Living Endowment Fund.

The difference between such nominal maintenance costs as those cited above and the salaries ordinarily paid teachers and trained workers is great. Commonwealth's existence has been made possible primarily by its living endowment fund. Eighteen teachers and workers serve the institution without salary, receiving only maintenance. Thus they regularly donate to the school the difference between the value of their services and the cost of the food, clothing, and incidentals they receive from it. During the past three years the value of such donations has amounted to more than \$50,000.

Teachers Affiliate

[Continued from Page One.]

tion with the other labor organizations of the state, and shall render you every assistance possible.

The application for affiliation was promptly granted. The Union Labor Bulletin, official journal of the federation and of the Little Rock central labor body, practically filled its front page with an outline of Commonwealth's work and an appeal for aid to the institution.

mitted to the Ohio bar, and shortly thereafter was appointed Registrar of the faculty at the University of Cincinnati.

Laborite. The Socialist movement, then waxing, allured him. A delegate to the national convention of the Socialist Party in 1901, he decided to work for Socialism. Moving to Kansas, he became the party's first state organizer there. Later he practiced law at Pittsburg, Kansas, specializing in labor cases. He still boasts of having obtained acquittal in the locally famed case of Jim Alice, coal miner who beat a company gunman to the draw.

Nineteen-four found him in Chicago, where he remained for 10 years. During four of these he was chairman of the Illinois state organization of the Socialist Party. Then he went back to Kansas, where he litigated professionally at Girard, present seat of the Little Blue Books. A later migration took him to Florida, and eventually back to his native Newport.

There he edited the Labor Herald, official organ of the labor unions of Northern Kentucky. When in 1921 economic depression and a nationwide open shop drive put this sheet out of business, Benton looked around for a parking place.

The Llano Co-operative Colony of Leesville, Louisiana, looked likely. Benton went there, taught school, and through earnest effort rose to the position of head gardener. There Commonwealth, coming in 1923, found him. Thence Commonwealth, departing in 1924, took him.

Authoritarian. Today, with 54 years behind him, some of them passed in rapid fashion, Benton looks only 44—and a 44 preserved by prudent and abstemious ways of life. His five feet four and a half inches and his slight frame belie a head that seems fitted for massive shoulders and a commanding stature. It deserves such a setting not because of size, but by virtue of shape and proportion. The features are well-chiseled and withal sun-bronzed, with just

[Continued on Page Four.]

Society Notes

Guest. Roger N. Baldwin, director of the American Civil Liberties Union, was the guest of Commonwealth for two days. He visited the college on behalf of the American Fund for Public Service, of which he is one of the directors. Baldwin spoke at an evening meeting of the Commonwealth group on the status of civil liberties in America.

Sightseer. Professor Hazzard, head of the English department at Louisiana State Normal College, vacationing in Mena, recollected rumors of Commonwealth. He decided personally to gaze upon the overall institution of learning. With friends he drove out, contemplated and interrogated for 30 minutes, and drove back. Nor was he disappointed. The first object that met his eyes was a teacher clad only in overall pants, sawing out rafters.

Departures. The last fortnight witnessed the departure of Peter Swenson, Jacob Svirski, and John McSarrow. Swenson is the Texas millionaire-oil man-social reformer who has been swapping ideas with Commoners for several weeks. Svirski is a former student who dropped in to spend his vacation working on the Commonwealth farm and building crew. McSarrow, labor veteran, had intended to remain through the school year but was called home by his mother's illness.

Flattering. Commonwealth, possessor of a full dozen qualified voters, received many flattering attentions during days preceding the recently-held local Democratic primaries. Ample opportunity was afforded Commoners to re-observe the pre-election social technique of candidates for public office. It was found to be invariable.

Prodigal. Eugene O'Hare, 18-year-old prodigal son of Commonwealth, has returned to the school with the paternal blessing of W. E. (Father) Zeuch. Gene flunked heavily during his freshman year at Commonwealth in 1924-25. Now he is back to make up school work preparatory to re-entering the college as a junior this fall. His mornings are sacred to bean picking and fence patching; his afternoons are devoted to commanded theories of value and the law of falling bodies. Gene himself, hopelessly enmeshed in these matters at three o'clock of a sweltering afternoon, closely resembles a falling-or-slipping body.

Library Acknowledges

The Commonwealth Library wishes to thank the following friends for recent gifts:

Olga Larsen, Chicago; 24 volumes on psychology, sexology, medicine, and miscellaneous subjects.

Roger N. Baldwin, New York; one copy of Bellamy's "Looking Backward"—the first offering of the Vanguard Press.

J. E. Kirkpatrick, Michigan; one copy of his book, "The American College and Its Rulers," just issued by the New Republic.

Peter Swenson, Texas; one copy of "Tolerance," by Hendrik Van Loon.

Book Reviews

NEARING SUMS UP

Russia Turns East. By Scott Nearing. Social Science Publishers, 7 West 106th Street, New York City.

Since 1919, says Scott Nearing, Soviet diplomacy "has severed the British Empire" by consolidating the Near East; has "gained a unique position in China"; has "established an alliance with Japan which is extremely favorable to both parties." An analysis of the economic, political, and psychological bases of these ententes, and an account of the various diplomatic steps by which they were completed, makes up the booklet.

This story of the triumph of Soviet diplomacy in Asia begins with the Russo-Persian Treaty of 1921, and concludes with the Russo-Japanese Treaty of 1925. There are many references to original sources throughout the text, and many of the treaties discussed are quoted in part. These treaties, says Nearing, "contain the language of a new diplomacy and of a new social order." They "score imperialism as bitterly as a Hyde Park radical"; they "renounce the practices of imperialism"; they restore to the Near-Eastern and Far-Eastern peoples the territory and the economic advantages wrested from them by the Czarist government. "The Soviet Union has presented a simple formula to the Asiatic peoples: Co-operate and be free. Their only possible choice lay between this formula and the continued exploitation and oppression of Western imperialism."

He ends with a comparison of the relative positions of the League of Nations and the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics in world diplomacy.

(Continued on Page Four.)

From Commoners Off The Campus

Reverent. Mildred and Raymond Koch function as the laundry of a New York summer camp where white duck is the vogue. They recently found that a week of six eight-hour work-days could not be stretched sufficiently to cover increasing washings. Reverent, they declined to desecrate the Sabbath, and voted to adopt a ten-hour shift.

Summary. Clara Rothberg, asked for more information about the garment workers' strike in which she took part, summarizes the story. "Our shop," she writes, "had to accept a 12½% reduction and go back to work after striking six weeks. So you see there is not much to say about this great victory." Clara's loss of income during the strike will probably make it impossible for her to return to Commonwealth this year, but she says that she will surely be back in 1927-28.

Affluent. Solomon Carp has steady work as a carpenter at \$12 a day. In his spare time he visits Brookwood, attends concerts, and philosophizes.

Milestone. Ten cents for travel and living expenses from Chicago to New York, a distance of over 1,000 miles by road, is the new record established by Ross Brown, college student hailing from California.

Leaving Chicago in possession of high spirits and ten dollars—his earthly all—Rossie espied a shiny dime in the middle of the road. Some remote Caledonian forbear stirred within him, and he annexed the dime, dropping it into a pocket. At sundown, somewhere in Ohio, the dime was still with him, but his purse containing the ten dollars was missing.

For the remainder of the trip Ross alternated periods of the fasting cure with the consumption of bananas proffered by motorists. "Everybody seemed to buy bananas," he says; "I sure got sick of them." On one occasion he slept in his host's car; on another he walked until midnight to escape mosquitoes, and finally slumbered in a grain field. Arrived in New York, he had a nickel left for subway fare.

Elapsed time for the trip was three days and a half. This time has been tied or bettered by other Commoners; but the figure for expenses represents a milestone marked.

Book Reviews

(continued from Page Three.)

today. This comparison, he says, shows Russia to be strongly entrenched in an advantageous position.

"By federation and by treaty agreement, the Soviet Union has established itself in a commanding position over the richest and most extensive land unit in the world. Its western boundary is the Baltic; its eastern, the Pacific. It includes half of Europe and a large portion of Asia. Across this whole strip of territory there are important mineral deposits and vast grain-raising areas."

While it can not be said that "the Eurasian economic and political unit now dominated by the Soviet Union is firmly united," nevertheless "the common economic and political interests of this unit are far greater than the common economic and political interests of the principal members of the League of Nations, or of any conceivable combination of capitalist imperialist states."

Written for workers, this booklet is divided into short sections—some of them less than a page in length—with topical headings which form a very fair outline of the text. Published for workers, it is well printed, paper bound, and low in price. It presents a subject usually considered difficult in a style at once simple, clear, and interesting. Condensed, yet adequate, its 30 pages are well worth a noon hour of any worker's time.

H. Z. B.

Who's Who

(Continued from Page Two.)

enough acquility to give power. The graying hair is still abundant; the graying mustache is restrained, judicial.

Benton, built on a larger scale, would make a fine figure of authority, stern, upright, powerful. As it is he is distinguished in appearance—but an anomaly. Perhaps it is some such anomalous development on the psychic side which is responsible for his standing today among struggling labor educators instead of among the mighty possessors of the earth.

For, unlike most radicals, in his thinking and feeling Benton identifies himself not with the outcast under-dog, but with duly constituted authority. He thinks in the imperative mood. Conservative, cautious, prone to invoke the letter of the law on all occasions—he is a typical authoritarian. One wonders how he came by the economic radicalism which caused him to spend years of

Good and Velfare

The Last Order of Business

By HAROLD BRONCO

Jehovah Suspended.

Compulsory patriotism is rife in Colorado. Specifically it appears as state legislation requiring school children to salute the flag. This and other rituals supposed by lawmakers to be productive of a desire to go out and die for one's locality are decreed to be part of education. Not even Jehovah may fly in the face of the Colorado legislature, as will be shown.

Roger N. Baldwin, director of the American Civil Liberties Union, arrived in Denver a few weeks ago. He stopped and looked around to see who was getting jailed there for believing too obstinately in the Constitution of the United States. Nobody was getting jailed just then, it seemed, but he was informed that 30 children had just been suspended from the Denver public schools for refusing to salute the American flag. Interested, he inquired further, and learned:

The 30 disciplined children were all from Jehovahite families. The Jehovahites are an obscure Christian sect, whose chief peculiarity seems to be taking their vacation seriously. (It will be remembered that this custom was once esteemed in America but is now in general disrepute.) About 600 in number, the sect's members reside in and around Denver. The Jehovahites are foes of war and nationalism, allowing that Jesus Christ said something about all men being brothers. They recognize no symbols whatever in their worship of God, and are so aggravatingly literal-minded as to believe that the Ameri-

can flag is a symbol. They think that saluting the flag is an act of idol-worship such as is specifically prohibited in the Ten Commandments. The leader of the sect is the Rev. Joshua W. Jehovah, whom his followers regard as the living incarnation of Christ.

This much the wiser, Mr. Baldwin immediately attempted to telephone Mr. Jehovah. He took up the telephone directory, opened it at "J" and recoiled from solid pages of Jehovahs. All members of the Jehovahite sect consider themselves literally the children of God, and so all take the surname "Jehovah." Finally getting the correct deity on the wire, Baldwin queried as to the school board's action. What did the sect expect to do about it? God would attend to the matter, Mr. Jehovah volunteered, in His own good time. Undoubtedly, Mr. Baldwin thought; but would the Jehovahites sue the school board? The Jehovahites would not, for it was not lawful for them to have recourse to earthly courts. Might the Civil Liberties Union, Mr. Baldwin then asked, sue the school board on behalf of the sect without implicating them in the legal proceedings? Jehovah was agreeable to that, and the matter is now in the hands of the union's Denver attorneys.

Funny? Yes, undoubtedly. But laughter is dampened by the fact that the Rev. Joshua served a year and a half in prison at McNeil's Island, Washington, under the espionage act, because he couldn't avoid telling his flock that military service was incompatible with their religious principles. Whatever one may think of the Jehovahite sense of humor, one must respect the Jehovahite sincerity. It is a variety distinctly exotic to the Christian ministry as a whole.

his life in the labor movement, and which eventually shunted him into the none-too-generous lap of Llano Colony.

Dissenting.

Benton evidently believes that the "nature" on which Sir Edward Coke recommended attorneys to "fix" a goodly portion of their time was the Commonwealth kitchen garden. Isolated in this interpretation as his confreres, Holmes and Brandeis, in their recurrent dissent, he none the less follows out his great master's indications to the letter. Day after day among watermelons, beans, squashes, and cabbages his hoe rises and falls with a reiteration comparable to that of the tides and seasons.

So it is that his associates at Commonwealth devoutly believe that

Benton will one day attain deserved fame in this state of his adoption as "the working lawyer." Incongruous as the "praying colonels" nickname of Centre College athletes, this sobriquet will ultimately make Benton's memory dear to rural Arkansawyers, who are only too familiar with the normal, or non-laboring, specimens of the legal profession.

—H. Z. B.

SCORES DOGMA

The authority of those who teach is very often an impediment to those who desire to learn.—Cicero.

Labor is discovered to be the great conqueror, enriching and building up nations more surely than the proudest battles.—Channing.

61-6156-4

OCT 6 - 1928

RECORDED

52304

October 4, 1928.

61-6156

MEMORANDUM FOR MR. LUEHRIG

I am transmitting attached hereto a communication from Senator Caraway, together with enclosures forwarded by him.

For your information, this correspondence was initiated by the Senator who inquired whether or not the Bureau possessed any information relative to the Commonwealth College, at Mean, Arkansas. The Bureau replied that it did not possess any data along the lines indicated. Senator Caraway then transmitted his letter of the 27th with certain information relative to the College in question. A perusal of the enclosures failed to indicate any violation of Federal Laws or Statutes. It appears to be purely what may be termed radical matters. However, since it has been submitted by the Senator, I assume that it should be properly referred to you in order that you may reply direct to Senator Caraway in accordance with your views and desires.

Very truly yours,

Encl. 252192.

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HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED
DATE 10/12/92 BY SP4/KW
254, 173

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XXXXXXFEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION
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February 10, 1934.

Special Agent in Charge,
Division of Investigation,
U. S. Department of Justice,
Post Office Box 1276,
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

52306

Dear Sir:

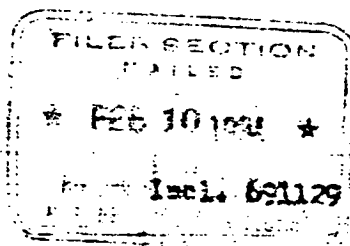
There are attached copies of an affidavit signed by [REDACTED] Mena, Arkansas, dated December 16, 1933, concerning conditions of immorality alleged to be now existing at the Commonwealth College located at Mena, Arkansas.

This affidavit was referred to the Division by the Secret Service Division of the Treasury Department, which apparently had received it from [REDACTED] b7c

[REDACTED] has been advised that an Agent from your office will contact him in the near future for all information in his possession relative to this matter. Such investigation as the facts may warrant should be conducted.

Very truly yours,

Director.



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FBI PM 224/193

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FEB 12 1934

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February 10, 1934.

Mr. F. H. Moran, Chief,
Secret Service Division,
Treasury Department,
Washington, D. C.

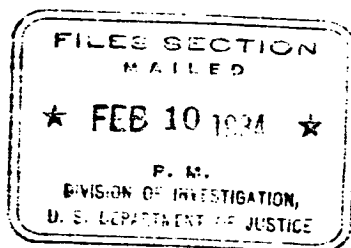
52307

Dear Sir:

This will acknowledge receipt of your letter dated February 1, 1934, transmitting an affidavit signed by [redacted] and dated at Mena, Arkansas, December 16, 1933, concerning conditions alleged to be existing at the Commonwealth College located at Mena, Arkansas, for which I desire to express my thanks. b7c

Very truly yours,

Director.



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DATE 9/17/82 BY SP1/pri/lt
FOIPA 224,193
b7c

61-6156-5

February 10, 1934.

FEB 12 1934

Mena, Arkansas.

52308

Dear Sir:

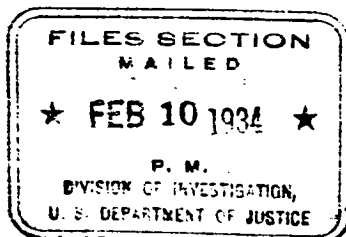
By reference from the Secret Service Division of the Treasury Department, receipt is acknowledged of your affidavit, dated December 16, 1933, concerning the immoral conditions now alleged to be existing at the Commonwealth College, located at Mena, Arkansas.

I wish to thank you for forwarding this information and to advise that a copy of your affidavit has been referred to Mr. Dwight Brantley, Special Agent in Charge, Division of Investigation, United States Department of Justice, 224 Federal Building, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, who will have an agent from his office interview you in the near future.

It will be appreciated if you will furnish this Agent with the details in your possession relative to this matter.

Very truly yours,

Director.



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234, 193

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61-6156 b7c

March 21, 1934

Special Agent in Charge,
Division of Investigation,
U. S. Department of Justice,
625 Lafayette Building,
Detroit, Michigan.

Dear Sir:

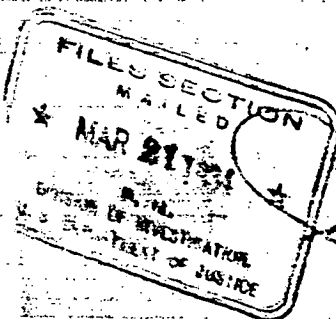
Your attention is invited to the letter directed to your office from the Oklahoma City Office dated February 24, 1934, requesting an interview with one [redacted] who is now located at Jackson, Michigan, concerning his allegations of immorality at the Commonwealth College, Mena, Arkansas. b7c

Please give this matter attention at the earliest practicable date.

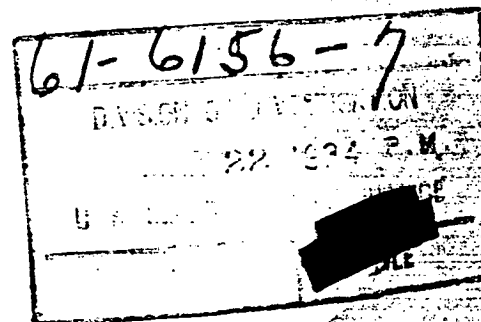
Very truly yours,

Director.

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DATE 9/17/82 BY SP1/PRL/LLT
FIPA 292/193



RECORDED



P. O. Box 1276
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma
February 24, 1934

DB:WLB
31-2598

Special Agent in Charge,
Division of Investigation,
U.S. Department of Justice,
625 Lafayette Building,
Detroit, Michigan.

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED

DATE 9/17/82 BY SP/2RL/W
FOIPA 224/193

Dear Sir:

Re: Commonwealth College,
Mena, Arkansas.

Recently the Division forwarded to this office copies of an affidavit signed by [REDACTED], Mena, Arkansas, dated December 16, 1933, concerning conditions of immorality alleged to be existing at the Commonwealth College located at Mena, Arkansas.

It has been learned that [REDACTED] who formerly was at Mena, is now receiving mail care of General Delivery, Jackson, Michigan. This office is in receipt of a letter from him at that point, dated February 21, 1934, in which he states he had talked to county authorities in Arkansas concerning this situation, but had been unable to obtain any results, et cetera. b7c

A copy of [REDACTED] affidavit is attached hereto and it is kindly requested that he be interviewed at the earliest practicable time, and any and all information obtained from him which would indicate a violation of the White Slave Traffic Act.

Very truly yours,

Dwight Brantley,
Special Agent in Charge.

Incl.
cc-Division ✓

61-6156
DIVISION OF INVESTIGATION
FEB 27 1934
U. S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
One

b7c

Post Office Box 2118
Detroit, Michigan
June 1, 1934

Special Agent in Charge
Division of Investigation
U. S. Department of Justice
Post Office Box 1276
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

Re: 0 COMMONWEALTH COLLEGE,
Mena, Arkansas

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
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DATE 9/17/82 BY SP10R/LIN
FBI 224/193

Dear Sir:

Reference is made to letter from your office under date of February 24, 1934, regarding the above entitled matter.

[redacted] was located at Jackson, Michigan, where he is residing [redacted] was interviewed by Special Agent [redacted] of this office [redacted]

[redacted] With reference to the college he stated that it is located about 11 miles west of Mena, Arkansas, and is operated by an association which he says is an offsprig from the New Llano Colony located at Leesville, Louisiana. The New Llano Colony he advised is a communistic organization. The Commonwealth College has for its purpose the object of teaching of communism and Marxism.

In regard to the affidavit submitted by him he stated that he was unable to furnish any more detailed information regarding a violation of the White Slave Traffic Act than is contained in that affidavit; that all the information he has is purely hearsay [redacted]

[redacted] He advised however that violations of the White Slave Traffic Act were purely personal escapades and he stated that he feels positive that none of the people concerned, who are the only ones in possession of this information, would furnish any information to an agent of this Division.

61-6156

INVESTIGATION
1934 A.M.
OF JUSTICE
FILE

[REDACTED] stated that the only person who might be able to furnish any information of value would be [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] He was under the impression that she was from the District of Columbia, and stated that her present address could undoubtedly be obtained at the Commonwealth College.

[REDACTED] turned over to agent an issue of the publication known as the Commonwealth News Letter, which contains some information concerning the school, and this is being transmitted herewith to your office. He stated also that some of the merchants in Mena, Arkansas, might be able to furnish information concerning this college, as he stated they have been endeavoring to curb the activities of this college for some time, because of the fact that in addition to communistic tendencies they also practice nudism, and that the townspeople have objected to this.

As there is no further investigation to be conducted by this office this case is being considered referred upon completion to the office of origin.

Very truly yours,

Wm. Larson
Special Agent in Charge

[REDACTED] vss
cc Division
Incl.

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THIS CASE ORIGINATED AT Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

FILE NO. 31-2598

REPORT MADE AT: Oklahoma City, Okla.	DATE WHEN MADE: 6/7/34	PERIOD FOR WHICH MADE: 6/5/34	REPORT MADE BY: Dwight Brantley.
TITLE: COMMONWEALTH COLLEGE, Mena, Arkansas.			CHARACTER OF CASE: White Slave Traffic Act.

SYNOPSIS OF FACTS:

[REDACTED] formerly of Mena, Ark. but now of Jackson, Michigan, complained of violations of the White Slave Traffic Act on part of persons at Commonwealth College, Mena, Ark. [REDACTED] interviewed at Jackson, Mich. and unable to furnish any information upon which intelligent investigation can be conducted. Case, therefore, closed.

C.

REFERENCE: Letter from Detroit Office, dated June 1, 1934.

DETAILS:

[REDACTED] formerly of Mena, Arkansas, now living at Jackson, Michigan, furnished the U. S. Secret Service at Washington, D. C. an affidavit in which he complained of immoral conditions alleged to be existing at Commonwealth College, Mena, Arkansas. This matter was referred by the Secret Service to the Division and by the latter to the Oklahoma City Office for appropriate interview with [REDACTED] for the purpose of obtaining information from him concerning the violation of the White Slave Traffic Act.

The letter of reference from Detroit, dated June 1, 1934, indicates that [REDACTED] was located at Jackson, Michigan

DETAILS:

[REDACTED] and was interviewed by Special Agent [REDACTED] which he alleges is operated by an association which is an offspring from the New Llano Colony located at Leesville, Louisiana, and that this association is communistic; that the Commonwealth College has for its purpose the object of teaching communism and Marxism. [REDACTED] stated that he was unable to furnish more detailed information concerning the violation of the White Slave Traffic Act than is contained in his affidavit; that all the information he

APPROVED AND
FORWARDED

COPIES OF THIS REPORT FURNISHED TO:
2-Division
1-Detroit
2-Oklahoma City

SPECIAL AGENT
IN CHARGE

DO NOT WRITE IN THESE SPACES

61-6156-8

RECORDED AND INDEXED

JUN 11 1934

BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

CHECKED OFF:

MAY 12 1934

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

JACKETED:

ROUTED TO:

FILE

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HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED

DATE 9/2/82 BY SP/10

224145

has is purely hearsay [REDACTED]
and that the White Slave Traffic Act violations, if any, were purely personal
escapades.

In view of the interview with [REDACTED] and the fact that he has
furnished no basic data upon which an intelligent investigation can be conducted,
the case is being considered as closed.

CLOSED.

b7c

JOHN W. McCORMACK
12TH DISTRICT MASSACHUSETTS

COMMITTEE
WAYS AND MEANS

EUGENE T. KINNALLY
SECRETARY

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C.

January 15, 1935.

✓
J. Edgar Hoover, Director,
Bureau of Investigation,
Department of Justice,
Washington, D. C.

My dear Mr. Hoover:

I am enclosing letter which I received from
Congressman Cravens, together with letter which he
received from [REDACTED] Mena Chamber of
Commerce, the contents of which speaks for itself.

As you know, the Special Committee of which
I am Chairman terminated so far as its investigatorial
powers are concerned on January 3, 1935. I am referring
this to you, as it may be of use in the future.

Sincerely yours,

[Handwritten signature]

Mr. Nathan.....
Mr. Tolson.....
Mr. Clegg.....
Mr. Baughman.....
Chief Clerk.....
Mr. Coffey.....
Mr. Edwards.....
Mr. Egan.....
Mr. Harbo.....
Mr. Keith.....
Mr. Lester.....
Mr. Quinn.....
Mr. Schilder.....
Mr. Tamm.....
Mr. Tracy.....
Miss Gandy.....

RECORDED & INDEXED

FEB 14 1935

61-6156-9
DIVISION OF INVESTIGATION
FEB 13 1935
U. S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
TAMM
HOLMES
ONE

Radical Activities in Congress

BEN CRAVENS
4TH DIST. ARKANSAS

COMMITTEES:
MINES AND MINING
FLOOD CONTROL
PUBLIC BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS
ELECTIONS No. 3

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

Washington, D.C.

January 2, 1935

Honorable Jol. McCormack,
Chairman,
Special Committee on UnAmerican Activities,
Room 520 House Office Bldg.,
Washington, D.C.

Dear Mr. McCormack:

I am enclosing you letter herein from the
Mena, Arkansas Chamber of Commerce, which is largely self-
explanatory.

From the contents of the letter, I am of the
opinion that the Chamber had in mind the activities of the Common-
wealth College, a supposedly educational institution, located
about fourteen miles from Mena and in Polk County, Arkansas.

This institution, according to my information,
is neither attended by Arkansas residents or in any way supported
by Arkansas contributions, and is looked upon with disfavor by the
citizenship of the County, and I think would bear investigation.

It is commonly reported in Mena and Polk
County that this is a Communistic institution, and I will appreciate
it if you will give it the proper investigation.

Yours very truly,

BC TMB

B. Cravens
BEN CRAVENS

INDEXED
P.C.

61-6156-9

MENA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

"MENA, HEART OF THE OUACHITAS"

IDEAL ALL-YEAR-ROUND CLIMATE, PURE WATER, BEAUTIFUL SCENERY
THE DELIGHT OF SUMMER AND WINTER VACATIONISTS

[REDACTED] b7c
MENA, ARKANSAS

December 23, 1934.

Hon. Ben Cravens,
Fort Smith, Arkansas.

Dear Mr. Cravens:

At a recent Board of Directors meeting the enclosed National Chamber pamphlet on Subversive Activities in the United States was considered and discussed and much interest was shown in the subject. Mention was made of the fact that there is much activity of that sort right here in our own county. Much concern was expressed over the situation and the Board was unanimous in feeling that the constant and insidious propaganda and even open advocacy of communist principles and the efforts of agitators to infiltrate communist doctrine into every branch of American life should not go unnoticed by us or our state and national administrations.

The Board instructed the writer to send you this pamphlet for your serious study and consideration and to advise you that this organization is in favor of amending existing federal statutes to definitely curb communistic activities.

With kindest regards and best wishes for your success in the New Year, we are

Yours very truly,

[REDACTED]
MENA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE,
By [REDACTED] b7c

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[REDACTED]

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